

The the myth or legend of Osiris the oldest are a long Pyramid ~~serjes~~ of hymns, prayers, incantations, and liturgies, which ~~Texts~~ have been found engraved in hieroglyphics on the walls, passages, and galleries of five pyramids at Sakkara. From the place where they were discovered these ancient religious records are known as the Pyramid Texts. They date from the fifth and sixth dynasties, and the period of time during which¹ they were carved on the pyramids is believed to have been roughly a hundred and fifty years from about the year 2625 B.C. onward. But from their contents it appears that many of these documents were drawn up much earlier; for in some of them there are references to works which have perished, and in others there are political allusions which seem to show that the passages containing them must have been composed at a time when the Northern and Southern Kingdoms were still independent and hostile states and had not yet coalesced into a single realm under the sway of one powerful monarch. As the union of the kingdoms appears to have taken place about three thousand four hundred years before our era, the whole period covered by the composition of the Pyramid Texts probably did not fall short of a thousand years. Thus the documents form the oldest body of religious literature surviving to us from the ancient world, and occupy a place in the history of Egyptian language and civilization like that which the *Vedic* hymns and incantations occupy in the history of Aryan speech and culture.¹

The The special purpose for which these texts were engraved

Texts¹ on the Pyramids was to ensure the eternal life and felicity intended of the dead kings who slept beneath these colossal monuments to ensure

of *ike Egyptians* (London, 1904), ii. (London, 1911), i. 100 123 *sqq. | z'd, Osiris and the Egyptian* series of the texts was *Resurrection* (London, 1911), i. I *sqq.* 1880 when Marietta's ¹ J. H. Breasted, *Development of* penetrated into the pyramid *Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt* (London, 1912), pp. vii. *sq. 77* by modern scholars *sqq. ^|sgq..gisgg.* Compare *id.. Hi.s-tory of the Ancient Egyptians* (London, 1908), p. 68; Ed. Meyer, *Geschichte des Altertums* ^ i. 2. pp. 116 \$qt; E. A. *Resurrection* *sqq.* The first discovered in workmen of King Pepi the First. Till then it had been thought that the inscriptions. Pyramid Texts was pero.